Congestion Management Process (CMP) Committee Meeting Minutes
Draft Memorandum for the Record
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

October 31, 2024, Meeting
11:00 AM–12:00 PM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Jay Monty, Chair, Representing Mayor Carlo DeMaria, City of Everett

Decisions

There were none.

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions
See attendance on page 7.

2. Public Comments
John Kyper (Massachusetts Sierra Club) and John Businger submitted comments via email for the meeting. Both comments were in support of the North-South Rail Link as a vital solution for reducing congestion in the Boston Region.

Steven Olanoff (Three Rivers Interlocal Council, Town of Norwood) stated his support for both comments.

3. New CMP Objectives—*Priyanka Chapekar, MPO Staff*
Priyanka Chapekar, MPO Staff, provided a brief recap of the Congestion Management Process and talked about the newly formulated proposed CMP objectives, which have been created in alignment with goals from the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) *Destination 2050*. P. Chapekar summarized the six broad goal areas of the LRTP, which are equity, safety, mobility and reliability, access and connectivity, resiliency, and clean air and healthy communities. P. Chapekar then talked about the new proposed objectives for the CMP along with their correlation with LRTP goal areas as follows:

1. Analyzing congestion: The first objective was summarized as setting up strategies to quantify and evaluate congestion patterns in the Boston Region, aligning with the mobility and reliability goal area.

2. Improving mobility and reliability: The second objective was summarized as improving efficiency and reliability of people and goods in the region, aligning with access and connectivity as well as safety goal areas.

3. Evaluating multimodal networks: The third objective was stated as evaluating multimodal networks and gaps between them, and formulating strategies to improve those gaps, aligning with mobility and reliability, as well as access and connectivity goal areas.

4. Community impacts: The fourth objective was summarized as considering community impacts of congestion reduction with special attention to environmental justice communities, aligning with clean air and healthy communities as well as equity goal areas.

5. Monitoring congestion performance: The fifth objective was stated as setting up evaluation systems for monitoring congestion leading to improved economic vitality, equity and climate resilience, aligning with the equity and resiliency goal areas.

Discussion

S. Olanoff commented that promoting use of public transportation to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use is a major solution for reducing congestion and asked whether that would be included as part of the objectives.

P. Chapekar responded that the MPO considers public transportation networks as an important aspect that can be elaborated further in objective three (Evaluating multimodal networks) by expanding it to specify public transportation within multimodal transportation networks.

S. Olanoff commented that the objectives can include ways to reduce car use and promote public transportation as increasing roadway capacity does not solve the congestion issue.

Jen Rowe (City of Boston) commented that other mechanisms such as roadway pricing policies should also be considered in addition to promoting public transportation use to explore multiple solutions for congestion management.

Len Diggins (Regional Transportation Advisory Council) commented that transit fits well under objective four (Community impacts) as it mentions reducing traffic volumes that could also happen through land use management. L. Diggins stated that value pricing policies for access to the transportation network can also be a solution as a larger model of the commonly known congestion pricing concept.

Susan Barrett (Town of Lexington) commented that Lexington has several applications for additional housing in the area that currently has limited transit service with low bus frequencies. S. Barrett stated that this is leading to an increase in the number of parking lots built in Lexington, which might further lead to congested roadways.

John Alessi (Town of Arlington) asked about the difference in objectives one (Analyzing congestion) and five (Monitoring congestion performance).

P. Chapekar responded that while there is significant overlap between the objectives, a distinction can be made between them as objective one focuses more on evaluating and mapping existing congestion patterns and can be considered as a predecessor to objective five, which focuses on setting up monitoring systems to reduce congestion.

John Romano (Massachusetts Department of Transportation [MassDOT]) seconded J. Rowe's and L. Diggins' comments about considering other solutions besides transit to mitigate congestion. J. Romano added that housing could also be factored in as a solution to reduce the amount of travel required.

L. Diggins commented on the role of transportation networks in determining future land use in relation to project selection for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which also supports denser housing and transit improvements. L. Diggins added that it would be helpful for the committee to consider timeline-based deliverables in conjunction with the proposed CMP objectives for achieving its set goals.

J. Rowe seconded J. Romano's comment on housing and S. Barett's comment on parking. J. Rowe stated that land use patterns also play an important role and could be included as part of the objectives along with a specific mention of traffic safety in objective two (Improving mobility and reliability).

J. Rowe asked if the proposed objectives could be sent out via email for review and feedback before the next CMP Committee meeting.

S. Olanoff commented that making the objectives shorter, clearer, and more concise would make them easier to understand for the intended audience.

4. Proposed CMP Multimodal Network—*Priyanka Chapekar, MPO Staff*

P. Chapekar gave an overview of the proposed multimodal CMP network stating that this network generally comprises only roadways for most CMPs. However, it is crucial to consider a multimodal network for the Boston Region due to its well-developed public transportation network and such a multimodal perspective could help to reduce roadway congestion, as discussed in the proposed objectives. In addition, P. Chapekar stated

that the proposed network would be a baseline for mapping and analyzing performance metrics.

P. Chapekar talked about the network characteristics that are used to analyze user volume trends on different modes of transportation based on set threshold values for each mode. P. Chapekar talked about the nine components of the proposed CMP network listed as follows:

1. Roadways
2. Freight corridors
3. Buses
4. Rapid transit
5. Commuter rail
6. Ferry
7. Other regional transit authorities
8. Bicycle networks
9. Pedestrian networks

P. Chapekar then gave an overview of each component proposed in terms of its data source, data used for mapping it on the network, and threshold usage value determined based on available data.

P. Chapekar reviewed the proposed roadway network that included parts of expressways and arterials with an Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) count of greater than 10,000. The data was sourced from the MassDOT 2023 Traffic Inventory dataset. The proposed freight component was summarized as roadways with freight AADT greater than 180 as well as critical freight corridors included in the National Highway Freight Network. P. Chapekar summarized the proposed bus network as fixed bus routes operated by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) with ridership greater than the total average ridership. The proposed Rapid Transit component includes all light and heavy rail lines operated by the MBTA.

For the commuter rail component, P. Chapekar stated that a slightly different threshold set of ridership per mile of commuter rail line route was considered to make the comparison more equitable considering varying lengths of the commuter rail routes.

P. Chapekar asked for feedback on the commuter rail network threshold considering that ridership per mile is not a conventional metric.

Discussion

Jay Monty, City of Everett, asked if it is appropriate to exclude certain transit networks from the CMP network by creating thresholds, especially considering that the CMP objectives focus on promoting higher use of public transportation as a way of reducing traffic congestion.

P. Chapekar responded that having thresholds makes it easier to focus analysis on parts of the networks having highest user volumes, in terms of traffic counts or ridership, and formulate relevant solutions. P. Chapekar added that it is crucial to avoid overlooking any transit service, but that would be better suited as part of the congestion mitigation solutions or strategies than the CMP network, which is more focused towards congestion and high user volumes on a network.

J. Monty asked whether considering only high ridership routes is a criterion that the CMP wants to adhere to or if it is more of a general idea of having some thresholds.

P. Chapekar responded that the main aim of the CMP network is to focus on higher utility modes and routes to see their correlation with congestion, but those criteria are open for modification.

L. Diggins commented that thresholds are important to consider factors currently affecting congestion, and by considering the lower ridership routes as a way of using existing capacity can be a part of mitigation or improvement strategies.

L. Diggins asked how Transportation Network Companies (TNC) would be factored into the congestion network as they are contributors to roadway congestion and a service that people tend to prefer over public transportation despite it being more expensive and sometimes also time-consuming.

P. Chapekar replied that while TNCs are an interesting avenue for exploration, MPO staff have not yet analyzed TNCs service separately from the other traffic network data, adding that it might not be very useful to make that distinction at the current state of the CMP. P. Chapekar stated that the topic can be included as part of the performance metrics, which would quantify congestion.

J. Monty commented that a station-wide approach for considering user volumes on the commuter rail might be a better way than going on a route-by-route basis.

S. Barrett commented that Transportation Management Associations' services are intended to reduce the number of vehicles on the road, but because of their low frequency, they might not pass the proposed threshold approach. S. Barrett asked if the

MPO is working with MassDOT Transit Planning, which is working on mapping fixed route demand services, and if the transit component of the CMP network can be overlaid with that work.

J. Romano commented that delivery drivers and their trips to and from warehouses are also important factors to consider for congestion contribution.

J. Rowe asked if the proposed network aims to consider segments of the transportation network currently experiencing congestion issues or to consider the transportation network as a solution to mitigating congestion in the region.

P. Chapekar responded that the network can be broadly divided into two categories—roadways and freight that analyze locations and segments with traffic congestion, and the public transportation aspect that focuses on high ridership routes to identify any demand and supply gaps.

J. Rowe stated that safety often becomes an issue where demand exceeds supply, especially on roadway segments. J. Rowe then asked if the CMP would consider roadways and transit segments where demand exceeds supply and identify the issues caused by the excess demand.

P. Chapekar replied that in terms of safety, the CMP will have a safety performance metric that analyzes crash types and crash severity, but how that can be included as part of the CMP network still needs to be considered.

P. Chapekar stated that for the next meeting discussion on four remaining components of the CMP network would be a part of the agenda, as well as a revised set of objectives and performance measures being analyzed.

5. Members' Items

There were none.

6. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the City of Everett (Jay Monty) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Len Diggins). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large Town, Town of Arlington	John Alessi
City of Boston	Jen Rowe
MBTA Advisory Board	Hanna Switlekowski
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
Massport	Sarah Lee
Three Rivers Interlocal Council, Town of Norwood	Steven Olanoff

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Susan Barrett	Town of Lexington
Tyler Terrasi	MWRTA
Victor Henry	

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff
Annette Demchur
Priyanka Chapekar
Ethan Lapointe
Lauren Magee
Erin Maguire
Sarah Philbrick
Sam Taylor

CIVIL RIGHTS NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Welcome. Bem Vinda. Bienvenido. Akeyi. 欢迎. 歡迎.

You are invited to participate in our transportation planning process, free from discrimination. The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is committed to nondiscrimination in all activities and complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency). Related federal and state nondiscrimination laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, sex, disability, and additional protected characteristics.

For additional information or to file a civil rights complaint, visit www.bostonmpo.org/mpo_non_discrimination.

To request accommodations at meetings (such as assistive listening devices, materials in accessible formats and languages other than English, and interpreters in American Sign Language and other languages) or if you need this information in another language, please contact:

Boston Region MPO Title VI Specialist
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116
Phone: 857.702.3700
Email: civilrights@ctps.org

For people with hearing or speaking difficulties, connect through the state MassRelay service, www.mass.gov/massrelay. Please allow at least five business days for your request to be fulfilled.